

Community Justice Partnership

Minutes of Meeting of the Community Justice Partnership held in Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 1 December 2016 at 10.30 am

Present:

Mr L Fraser, Highland Council
Mrs I McCallum, Highland Council
Mr G Mackenzie, Highland Council
Mr D Millar, Highland Council
Detective Supt C Carey, Police Scotland
Mr M MacBean, Victim Support Scotland
Mr A Macdonald, Apex Scotland
Ms L Bligh, Libertie Project
Ms L Dorward, Scottish Prison Service
Ms M McShane, Community Justice Project Manager

In attendance:

Mr J Maybee, Principal Officer, Criminal Justice, Highland Council
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Highland Council

Mr D Millar in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr G Rimell, Highland Council and Ms J Macdonald, NHS Highland.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

There were circulated and **APPROVED** the minutes of previous meetings held on 2 June 2016 and 1 September 2016.

4. Community Justice Plan Development – Progress Update

There was circulated Report No CJP/08/16 dated 17 November 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update and overview of progress with the compilation of the Community Justice Plan for Highland.

The report outlined the work carried out to date and the overall process for the compilation and submission of the Community Justice Plan for Highland to the Scottish Government by 31 March, 2017. Given that the community justice plan should link to the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and that this would not be

completed until October 2017, the community justice plan tenure would be for one year.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- In relation to all the statutory partners involved in community justice, it was queried if they were all participating in the planning process in order to provide a multi agency plan. It was confirmed that between the Community Justice Partnership Group and the Officers' Group for Community Justice, there was good representation and engagement from the various agencies. However, the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service were not represented on either Group and it was intended to invite a representative from that Service to the next meeting of the Officers' Group.
- In relation to the awareness raising events that had taken place throughout Highland, it was queried if these had been well attended. It was advised that attendance levels at these events had been mixed, and overall there had been approximately 100 attendees for all events held in Highland. This was satisfactory given that there was not much public awareness about community justice. There may be the opportunity to hold further events in future and there was also an Officer attendance at Community Planning Partnership meetings. It was suggested that information on community justice could be submitted to Highland Council Local Committees or Ward Forums to help raise awareness. It was stressed that all partners should use opportunities to raise awareness of community justice and why it was important.
- It was important to identify the need for community justice in communities, so that actions could be put in place to address the issues;
- It was advised that Apex Scotland had been undergoing a partnership transition in conjunction with NHS Highland and the Criminal Justice Service and the transition had been successful. Apex Scotland, along with four other third sector organisations had received match funding for the period to 2020 which would be extremely positive for the Criminal Justice Partnership.

The Partnership **AGREED** the content of the report which outlined the overall process for the compilation and submission of the community justice plan for Highland.

5. Launch Event of Guidance/Strategy & Outcome Performance and Improvement Framework, Edinburgh – Update

The Community Justice Project Manager gave a verbal update on the launch event of the Guidance/Strategy & Outcome Performance and Improvement Framework held in Edinburgh on 24 November, 2016.

The launch event included a speech from the Chief Executive of Community Justice Scotland who spoke about:- effective sentencing; getting it right for every offender; prevention required to be at the heart of community justice; the political will to change the landscape for community justice; information and education to help change the view of offenders by society.. The Chief Executive was keen to visit different Partnerships in Scotland and the Group may wish to consider inviting the Chief Executive to a future meeting of this Partnership.

Continuing, the Head of Community Justice Operations Unit in the Scottish Government spoke about the community justice strategy being a long term vision, supported by long term outcomes and there was a commitment to undertake

improvement actions over a five year period. The community justice plan would include who we are; where we are and what were our priorities. The Head of Community Justice would welcome an invitation to speak to the Partnership Group.

There were workshops at the event and all of the attendees went to two of the workshops that were on offer. The Community Justice Project Manager attended the workshops on 'how do we change the debate on crime and punishment' and 'mental illness and learning disabilities within the criminal justice system'.

There were also speakers from the Criminal Justice Service Voluntary Sector Forum who advised that if you keep funding things the same way, you will continue to get the same product. Therefore, the Partnership should consider different ways of funding criminal justice initiatives. There was also a need to maximise the potential of people with lived experience and using local press instead of national media to raise awareness.

It would be up to each Partnership Group to make community justice work for its own area and sharing of good practice with other areas would help with this.

In relation to inviting the Chief Executive of Community Justice and the Head of Community Justice to Highland, they could attend either this Partnership Group or the Officers' Group and consideration would be given to video conferencing the event to interested parties to maximise the public awareness of their visit to Highland.

The Group:-

i **NOTED** the update on the launch event of the Guidance/Strategy & Outcome Performance and Improvement Framework; and

ii **AGREED** that the Chief Executive of Community Justice and the Head of Community Justice be invited to attend either this Partnership Group or the Officers' Group for Community Justice and consideration be given to video conferencing the event to interested parties.

6. Community Justice - Budget Update

There was circulated Report No CJP/09/16 dated 16 November 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the additional funding from Scottish Government for the transition to the new model of Community Justice. Members were asked to consider the options for the predicted underspend in 2016/17 and future use of the resource in 2017/18.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- the option to retain the Project Manager post until 2019 was essential given that this post was critical to the successful development of community justice and development implementation and oversight of the annual plan;
- in relation to the option of additional investments as a partnership to collectively commission services, this would enhance the level of interest that people have in community justice and provide opportunities to communities in Highland. This could involve participatory budgeting (PB). In terms of the process for PB a criteria would require to be devised that agencies and communities could bid into. Thereafter, an event would be arranged whereby, for example, third sector agencies would set out

their proposals for funding and thereafter there would be votes to determine the projects to be funded. The funding could therefore be shared out to community justice projects across Highland.

- As the current funding from the Scottish Government for transition to the new model of community justice was only guaranteed for 3 years, it was suggested that there be a detailed rationale drawn up for how PB would work before a decision was made on this option and in the meantime more details of the Government funding plans post 2018 may become available. It was advised that a proposal on how PB would work could be submitted to the next meeting of the Partnership. However, if the Scottish Government did not allow any underspend to be rolled forward into 2017/18, then funding would require to be allocated by March, 2017. Therefore there may not be the time to spend the funding on PB and other options would have to be considered if the funding was to be used for criminal justice initiatives.
- Given the uncertainties over the Scottish Government funding post 2017/18 and the need for a detailed proposal on PB, Members were in agreement that Options one and two be deferred until the next meeting and that funding for options three and four be progressed.

Thereafter, the Partnership having considered the options for the use of transitional funding for community justice, **AGREED:-**

i that a decision on funding for options one (*sustaining the Project Manager post until 2019*) and two (*additional investments as a partnership*) as detailed in the report, be deferred until the next meeting, for more clarity on Scottish Government funding for criminal justice, post 2017/18 and for a detailed proposal on PB to be considered;

ii the funding for Option three (*the view of victims*) and Option four (*the views of offenders*).

7. Communicating with Communities – Progress Update

There was circulated Report No CJP/10/16 dated 17 November 2016 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update and overview of progress with the Communication Strategy for Community Justice and highlighted issues which have arisen around this.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- In relation to communication with the wider public, agencies had their own individual methods of communication, but what was needed was how to communicate collectively for community justice purposes.
- An intern was due to start on the Libertie Project in March, 2017. The remit for the intern was community engagement and some of the intern's work could be devoted to community justice;
- The Council undertook a survey every year through its Citizens' Panel and it was suggested that a section of this survey could be devoted to community justice. It was advised that discussion with the Council on this matter indicated that it would be better for community justice to do a separate survey. However the cost of undertaking a survey and the analysis would be £12k.
- It was suggested that providing briefings to community groups etc, would be more effective than undertaking a survey. In this respect, briefings could be given to the Council's Local Committees/Ward Forums, Community Council Associations and other community groups. It was suggested that various

members of the Partnership/Officer Group could share the workload in providing briefings and that a video on community justice could be produced for showing at briefings.

The Partnership:-

i **NOTED** the report in relation to engaging and communicating with communities, particularly the general public around community justice; and

ii **AGREED** that Officers would propose an appropriate format for providing briefings to Highland Council Local Committees/Ward Forums, and Community Council Associations and other local Community Groups.

8. Dates of Meetings – 2017

The Partnership **APPROVED** the following schedule of meetings for 2017:-

Wednesday 22 February -10.30am
Thursday 22 June – 2.00pm
Wednesday 27 September – 10.30am
Wednesday 15 November – 2.00pm

The meeting concluded at 11.30 a.m.